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# Essay

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OB #53

## Brain drain in Pakistan: a temporary advantage of limitless loss

### Outline:

#### 1. Introduction:

##### Thesis Statement:

Brain drain in Pakistan offers very limited, short-term and temporary advantages to Pakistan at the expense of its intellectual human capital. The implications of brain drain in Pakistan are highly adverse causing a limitless loss to the country in a long run.

#### 2. Causes of Brain Drain in Pakistan

- a. Lack and inequality of opportunities
- b. Poor higher education infrastructure
- c. Moribund meritocracy due to corruption
- d. Low and insufficient salaries

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### 3. Temporary Gains of Brain Drain

- a. Increased Foreign Remittances
- b. Promotion of soft image of Pakistan via international diaspora
- c. Stimulates education in Pakistan
- d. Better opportunities in other countries

### 4. Limitless Loss due to Brain Drain

- a. Declined economic growth
- b. Loss of cultural heritage
- c. Less income tax revenue
- d. Lack of confidence among indigenous skilled persons
- e. Loss of strategic human capital for key positions

### 5. Solutions to contain Brain Drain

- a. Creating opportunities by improved business environment
- b. Reforming the education system
- c. Transparent and corruption free system
- d. Offering competitive wages

### 6. Conclusion

## Essay:

Youth, all across the globe, seeks green pastures in return of its contribution to society. Being highly adaptable to new cultures and environmental changes, young people do not feel hesitant to fly overseas in search of better financial opportunities. The highly skilled and educated masses of developing and under developed countries leave no stone unturned in search of improved life in developed countries. Pakistan is also among those developing countries whose youth desires to settle abroad in order to live a better life. This transport of highly intellectual and skilled people is called "Brain Drain" for the source country and "Brain Gain" for the countries that welcome those people.

Due to current social, economic and political situation of the country, Pakistan has become one of the significant victims of brain drain. Brain drain in Pakistan offers very limited, short-term and temporary advantages to the country at the expense of its intellectual human capital. The implications of brain drain in Pakistan are far more adverse, causing a limitless loss to the country in a long run.

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Brain drain in Pakistan is stimulated and supported due to various reasons. Lack of opportunities for the youth to engage themselves in their desired occupations has been a major cause behind the brain drain. Another harming aspect is the unequal distribution of available opportunities. This inequality is based on various factors like province, gender, political affiliations or social status. A recent example of access this aspect has been recorded in the Battagram chairlift incident. The young students of Battagram had to risk their lives so that they may reach their school. However, in Lahore, new projects are launched to minimize the time consumption in commute to motorway. This inequality of opportunities, based on the region a student belongs to, leads youth towards losing confidence in government policy and intum thinking of leaving the country.

A recent UN report reveals that among 22 million out of school children of Pakistan, 12 million are girls. It is another example of gender based inequality of opportunities. The skilled and talented youth finds it easier to fly abroad and earn more than to suffer and tolerate the issues in Pakistan.

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The evil of corruption is deep rooted in our social, economic and political system which is ultimately leading towards negligible meritocracy in the state. When young people are not catered with the positions and privileges they deserve, they focus on gaining jobs abroad. Pakistan stands very low on the transparency index due to widespread corruption in the country. The people of Pakistan, despite fulfilling the merit requirements, sometimes lose their prospect job due to unavailability of a strong reference or providing demanded cash to the employers. It results in frustration towards the system.

Among various factors which cause brain drain in Pakistan, low and insufficient salaries of job holders results in brain drain. It is because they are offered far more improved and high salaries <sup>abroad</sup> for the same amount of work they do here in Pakistan. The people working in private and public sector suffer from insufficient wages. But the exploitation of peoples need of job is very in private sector is very obvious. People agree on low wages as it is better to have a low paid job than being jobless.

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Brain drain in Pakistan, however, provides some short lived and temporary gains to the country. The increased population of Pakistan that works abroad brings increased remittances to Pakistan. According to a survey, Pakistan gained some six billion. The World Bank said Pakistan has gained a 26% per cent growth in its remittances. The overseas workers' remittances during the fiscal year 2022-2023 were recorded at 27 billion dollars (Pakistan Remittance Survey, State Bank of Pakistan, 2023).

One of very significant gains of brain drain is the promotion of soft image of Pakistan all across the globe. The educated and skilled people of Pakistan, who live abroad, promote the positive and constructive image of the country. Brain drain has promoted Pakistan's soft image via its international diaspora. Currently, over 9 million or more than four percent of country's population is living in 115 different countries all across the world. The overseas Pakistan diaspora has successfully imparted an image of a peaceful and culturally rich country in the world.

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Another primary gain from brain drain in Pakistan is that it has stimulated education in the country. Many young people study more diligently in order to qualify for a foreign scholarship. It has increased educated youth among the population which is a positive impact of brain drain.

Compared to these very 'few' gains of brain drain, there are major disadvantages of brain drain in Pakistan. Although, the remittances have become a good source of foreign reserves but it is a very small impact. If the skilled workforce of Pakistan had worked in the country, they would have brought far more long lasting economic advantages. The skilled, talented, educated and intellectual people would have brought amazingly impactful and positive changes in Pakistan's economic environment.

Pakistan is also losing its strategic intellectual human capital for key positions as a consequence of increased brain drain. The people with intellectual abilities

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and leadership qualities leave country for better future for themselves. Consequently, there is either a vacuum of leadership or incapable people lead the population to extract their own vested interest.

In spite of all these disadvantages and problems created by brain drain, it is not impossible to contain brain drain. By taking some measures in various fields, Pakistan can control further brain drain from the country.

Firstly, an improved and inclusive business environment can attract foreign direct investments which will ultimately create various job opportunities for the 31 percent unemployed youth of Pakistan (International Labour Organisation report, 2023). Secondly, a reformed and improvised education system can lead towards more skillful people that will ultimately fulfill the need of country. Thirdly, a transparent and corruption free system can boost meritocracy which will increase youth's confidence in the government and state. Lastly, by offering competitive wages and improving work conditions for public and private employees can curb the exceeding brain drain.

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Overall, it can be stated in a nutshell that brain drain in Pakistan has very few positive and advantageous aspects for the social, economic, cultural and political sector of the country. The negative implications of the brain drain are very high in number as compared to the gains associated to brain drain. However, by taking right steps towards right direction, Pakistan can curb and contain the exceeding brain drain.

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